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*RELIGION AND SOCIALISM*

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## I

That a coöperative commonwealth is on the way, it would be rash to assert; but that forces tending in such a direction are gathering strength is even more evident in England and on the continent of Europe than with us. While discussions of socialist theory on economic and political lines increase and multiply, another line of thought suggests itself to people preëminently interested in the spiritual rather than in the economic conditions of the race. Supposing a socialist organization of society realized, what would be the reaction on the ethical and religious consciousness,—on creed, on worship, on conduct?

It is the purpose of this paper to suggest a few points on the second of these themes,—the probable future of religion under socialism. The subject is less remote from present interests than appears: hypothetical though it be, the attitude of many people toward socialism itself will depend on their conclusions on this point.

Many spectators of the modern drift can see in socialism only "the party of progressive materialism," or, at best, an insidiously dangerous desire to realize brotherhood by machinery. One hears them reiterate the conviction that an inner change alone can help and heal the sorrows of humanity, and that all who care for the Spirit, yet range themselves on the socialist side, are victims of a delusion all the more dangerous for its loftiness, dupes of that very materialism which they think to fight. It is in vain to plead with these critics the obvious identity of the ethics of socialism with those of Christianity. The very fact seems to them a snare to the unwary; for they tell us that the effort to make these ethics function, as it were, automatically,

would, if successful, deprive them of all vitality and power. They see, as Father Hugh Benson saw in his amazing and disconcerting story, *Lord of the World*, an impending conflict in which the forces of evil shall appear under the banner of humanitarianism and freedom, while the armies of the Lord apparently endorse all the sordid miseries and futile strife of the civilization we know, on the plea that the soul can best find itself in a world whose very horrors lead it to distrust the life of nature, and to flee from the temporal to the refuge of eternity.

In the rising struggle that we all must share, critics of this type are persons greatly needed by the socialist fellowship. And this, both because their antagonism helps to prolong the hesitation of the religious world over its bearings, and because the socialist world, as one must freely confess, too often justifies their strictures by confusing the ideologist and the idealist in a common condemnation. Direct argument and prophecy are likely to avail little against this mode of thought; yet, while we wait for experience to do its work, the testimony of those socialists who care supremely for spiritual values, and their groping thoughts on the nature of the new charter which, as they believe, will be presented to religion by the social democracy, ought to be worth giving.

And we have to acknowledge, as a preface, that we face a situation which seems to deliver the case at once to the adversary. For, despite perfunctory statements to the contrary, born of political exigencies, socialism of the more materialistic type habitually implies that it is in itself the religion of the future. Certainly, a large number of its adherents get the effective elements of religion—a power that impels, a hope that sustains, and an emotion that purifies—from their socialist creed. Impatient of the long generations that preached a smug heaven to a proletariat in chains, they are inclined in reaction to deify the flesh and to coin religion from revolt. That ideal of a pacific and fraternal order which socialism holds steadfastly before a civilization helplessly subject to the dominance of licensed greed, is indeed so grateful that we cannot wonder if people contemplating it confound their deep sense of relief and release with the peace that passeth understanding. Though the Roman church

has often proved short-sighted, her flair is keen. Her attacks on socialism mean more than the mere distaste for a party that happens today to be fighting the hierarchy: they imply perception of a rival at the centre, whose promises to satisfy the ageless hunger of the secret heart may prove more alluring than her own.

Yet how evident it is that the promises bear really no relation to the hunger! True, socialism derives part of its strength from the prospect it holds forth of realizing in a measure here on earth that "Civitas Dei" toward which human vision ever strains. True, its power is reinforced by the fact that it first supplied the need for ideal passion in a century when theological and mystical interests were driven into far recesses by the ardor of scientific advance, and the quest for outward prosperity. But no theory nor system of purely human relations can, in the long run, offer a religion. In vain did Leigh Hunt say to Shelley that humanity would find its true religion when charity supplanted faith as a working force. In vain does that fine spirit, John Spargo, writing on *The Spiritual Significance of Socialism*, tacitly assume—with how many others—that fraternal feeling translated into life is the Omega as it is the Alpha of the religious consciousness. The burden of proof rests on the school of these thinkers, not on those of us who follow the evidence of all human history in holding that the love of the brother seen does but spur man on to the love of the Unseen God. Beyond the Alps lies Italy. The listening ear of the race can never cease to hearken to a Voice that speaks out of the silences beyond the range of time and sense. The relation of economic and social forces to the travail of the soul is, we freely admit, more intimate and fundamental than pre-modern thought surmised; yet spiritual activity is the blossoming of humanity's garden,—at once the end of all enrichment of soil and culture of root, and the promise and parent of what fruit the race has to present.

As our thought continues, let us mean by religion the conscious relation of man to a Life and Love "present and yet Beyond"; "sustaining the world by the immanence of His Will, and transcending the world by the glory of His Being."<sup>1</sup> The twentieth

<sup>1</sup>"Credo," Hibbert Journal, April, 1909.

century is assuredly bringing reinforcements to the convictions of those who believe that religion in this sense will always be essential to peace and progress. The brief interval of indifference, lasting a trifle of two centuries, is over: at its height it was partial. Did not the eighteenth century produce William Law and the Wesleys? Is not Chesterton right in claiming that the doubt of the Victorian age was as faithful as its faith was doubtful? As this new century sweeps us on with one of those accelerated movements in history of which the pace is dizzying, we cannot ignore the fact that religious passion plays an essential rôle among the forces that lead toward the future.

## II

The path on which society is impelled is the resultant of complex forces; no one who isolates a single phenomenon, even so great as socialism, can rightly apprehend its direction. Intelligently to enquire into the reaction of the rising social democracy on religion, we must view the situation of the Western world as a whole. If we do so, we find two other phenomena, equal in dramatic quality to the impending economic change. One is the advance of Western science, the other the influence of Eastern thought.

Sixty years ago science was, to the popular mind, endorsing materialism; today, it is enhancing mysticism. As the modern scientist presses nearer the ever-fleeing realities, the regions into which they lead him look awesomely strange. Material and immaterial are terms that threaten to lose significance; we may venture to say that the theological dogmatizing of our grandfathers was no farther from our more generous religion than the instinctive scepticisms of nineteenth-century science from the reverent expectancy of science today.

Meantime, the treasures of the Orient and of the Occident are blending. Racial immobility is at an end. The East opens her arms, perforce or no, to the eager onrush of the West, and, while she zealously studies our scientific acquirements and tries to adopt our scientific methods, we, on our side, begin to meditate

in amazed humility upon that ancient philosophic wisdom which she has preserved intact.

The rising passion for social reconstruction, the advance of science, the new fellowship between East and West,—is it by accident that these three forces are at play on Western civilization at the same time? It seems more likely that the future will discern among the three some necessary relation. Sixteenth-century scholars absorbed in Greek manuscripts were probably not over-much concerned with the reports of adventurers from far untraversed lands; nor were men of either type necessarily excited over the struggle for religious freedom in Germany. Yet scholar, discoverer, reformer, were parts of one movement of expansion, and we see today how the revival of letters combined with the new geography and with the Reformation to produce that bright new civilization before which feudalism fled like a vanishing cloud.

Many are pointing out the significance of the new alliance between Western science and Eastern philosophy; the bearing of both on social reconstruction is less in evidence. Yet in regard to the relations of science and socialism, it is in the first place a truism to recall that only when evolutionary law was applied to social progress could the modern socialist theory arise; and it is obvious in the second place that the tormenting problems of providing for the physical welfare of the race could only be solved in a socialist sense in an age that was swiftly subduing natural forces to human service. In other finer ways also science delivers us from the utopian and reactionary temper common to earlier socialists. Building on Plato, these noble dreamers invented imaginary communities to be arbitrarily imposed on a natural order unrelated or antagonistic. That spiritualizing and refining of our conception of the natural world, that intuition of unity between outward and inward with which science is now busy, gives us a new point of view. It reconciles us to nature; and so helps us to form the ideal of a socialist state which, because it will be in a sense a natural product, will prove an appropriate vehicle of expression to a race whose intimacies with the visible universe are to be closer and more subtle than the past has known.

And, if we are wise, we must begin to discern a still more startling meaning in the thirsty gaze which men begin to turn toward the founts of Eastern wisdom. Can it be without significance that even while the Western world suffers the birth-pangs of the new coöperative order, it begins to realize for the first time the spiritual treasures harbored by civilizations which through long ages we have despised?

“The East bowed low before the blast  
In patient, deep disdain:  
She let the legions thunder past,  
Then plunged in thought again”—

not alone for her own sake, surely. In the great Providence that rules the destinies of the peoples, East and West are meeting at the exact moment when the vista opens of a society gradually evolving so high a degree of industrial peace and social justice that spirit may seek for Spirit, driven back no longer on pressing anxieties or clamorous compassions. The great gift of the Orient is an ever-present sense of the Eternal. The heyday of competition, intoxicated with its own unlovely successes, would have scouted this gift as absurd. In a community in which material production, being socially organized, no longer absorbs attention, its influence may well be healthful, pertinent, and deep. We can easily imagine the religious historians of the socialist state noting with delight the special preparation of the West, by drastic changes in the social order, to receive what the more contemplative races have to offer.

Does some ingenious person threaten us at this point with the danger of sinking like the Orient into an ageless dream? It is amusing to picture Europe and the United States in this connection! We may trust to the very temperament of the West, to the growing call to the adventures of science, to the unrelaxing industrial disciplines of the socialist state, for our protection. Indeed, the passion of the new society for activity and efficient achievement is likely enough to need supplementing. What social order has ever yet offered equal incentive to vigorous interest in the phenomenal world and ardent search for the reality behind phenomena? Noble action and noble contem-

plation have seldom indeed flourished together. Yet both are essential to fulness of life. In the thoughtful words of Baron von Hügel:<sup>2</sup> "The movement of the Christian life is not a circle round a single centre,—detachment,—but an ellipse round two centres, detachment and attachment. And precisely in the difficult but immensely fruitful oscillation and rhythm between the two poles of the spiritual life, in this fleeing and seeking, and not in either of these two movements taken alone, consists the completeness and culmination of Christianity." And, we may add, of religion. We have good reason to hope that the new society will offer the most favorable conditions yet found for this "fruitful oscillation." The socialist state, intent on far-sighted organization of the greater industries, and on conquest of the material resources of the globe, is not likely to weaken in that "attachment" which has always marked civilization in the West; yet the release from nervous strain, and the tranquillity that it should ensure, may well foster the correlative increase of those powers of detachment which have been the specialty of mystics in those ancient lands where the spirit gazes, more fixedly than we are wont to do, on the countenance of Truth. No one can calculate the depth and worth that may accrue to the influences of the East in a socialist state. To these influences we well may look to counteract the temptation to a new hedonism, to acquiescence in a natural life all too pleasant to lure the spirit on, which we may predict as the special peril of a social democracy.

### III

A coöperative Society, gaining a continually greater insight into natural law and greater control over natural forces, while at the same time it is free from racial or national provincialism and is open to influences from all quarters of the globe: here, then, is the scene in which the spiritual drama of the future must be played. But before we try to forecast the drama, let us pause a moment more to consider the contrast the atmosphere of that time will present to our own.

<sup>2</sup> The Mystical Element in Religion.

Were it ours to read the secrets of that vast psychical activity which is coextensive with history, we should not be surprised to find that religion in the sense in which we have defined it, the direct experience by the spirit of man of the Spirit of God, has been fainter during the last two centuries than at any preceding time in Christian story. If we may trust the records of the inner life, an immediate consciousness of God—let us use the great term in all simplicity—was far more common in the twelfth, thirteenth, or seventeenth, century than it is today.

Such a statement must of course be hazarded with full knowledge of its unverifiable nature. But even very devout people who live much in prayer now habitually confess with sorrow that this consciousness is rarely attained. The sense of loss so common among the Victorians pointed to a real desolation:

“He is not risen, no!  
He lies and moulders low!  
Christ is not risen!”

For one who expressed it, many must have felt, many continue to feel, this hidden tragedy. “Doubtless thou art a God that hidest thyself,” is the deep cry of the age.

This prevalent blindness and blankness has been assigned to various causes. Is it fantastic to ascribe it in part to the miasma that rises from the industrial condition of the masses, crushed and stifled under the brutalizing influences of the competitive system? Religion, with all its privacy, is not only the most personal, but the most social, of phenomena: the spiritual atmosphere is as all-pervading as the physical, and is equally sensitive to social pollution. The spiritual exhalations of our vulgar and cruel democracy have accurately corresponded to the physical, and are equally noxious. Where there is keen economic distress, religion is always overclouded. Some men will be drawn to sheer revolt, others dominated by physical depletion. Others still, including the finest spirits, will find an all-engrossing religion in the service of the sick and sorry. But between all men and the heavens will rise a dim and vaporous pall, impalpably thin, impenetrably dusked, like the veil of smoke belched forth by the myriad chimneys of a manufacturing town. To be sure, the

stars can be discerned through the murk. Even the dweller in a modern city may rejoice in the ceaseless pageant of day and night that silently envelops our shrieking human activities. But let him escape from the town, and rest on some low headland, over the lapping waters of the Atlantic, where the breeze blows salt and clean, and shadows lie purple on the green shallows of the bay,—where the sky is the real blue that nature meant, softened only by low lines of half-invisible cloud-pearls at the horizon; he will rediscover a new heaven that will perhaps give him a promise of a new earth. It is not in cities that modern astronomers build their towers.

We modern folk are likely to be increasingly a race of city-dwellers; but good hopes are held out to us that the cities of the future may be smokeless. There are equally valid reasons for believing that the social democracy will clear the spiritual air. The firm disciplines which will press on all men may not in themselves tend to heavenly-mindedness; but they must develop such serviceable qualities of self-subordination and regulated capacity as should form an excellent preliminary to the graces and activities of the soul. The noble emphasis on the charities and the sympathies, which now distracts men from higher religious aspirations, will fall into subordinate harmony; and the race we seek to create, heirs of a fine liberty social rather than individualistic, freemen because bound in ordered service, will possess powers no longer preëempted by lower needs. Doubtless, the relief from the sharp pressure of the economic struggle will afford a snare to the spiritually indolent; just as surely it will afford an opportunity to those who are spiritually inclined. No sensible man looks forward to a time when religion will be easy; the perils that the soul must encounter will be no less dramatic and dangerous in the future than in the past. But the struggle will be carried on under clearer skies than now. Already we can discern a rift in the vapors; and perhaps it may be granted to our children, or, if not to them, to our grandchildren, to see the whole sullen fog-bank that blocks our vision, roll triumphantly away.

## IV

We may without fatuity, then, regard that comparative social justice, to attain which all our best powers today are bent, not as an end in itself, but as the preface to a higher religious evolution. And we are ready to ask,—What types of religious life are likely to obtain in the socialist state?

To English readers, at least, the question presents itself under three aspects: the future of religion at large; the probable future of Christianity; and the possible fate of the forms of Christianity, in particular of the two great divisions, Protestantism and Catholicism. The present paper deals with the first of these, only, the other two being treated elsewhere. To be of any value the discussion must be frankly personal. One can only present these matters from his own angle of vision, basing his answers carefully on his perception of the new spiritual life already pushing its restless way toward the light, no less than on forecasts of growth in the new order.

The larger religious future is inevitably bound up with three questions. Will religion be a matter of dogma, or of intuition and unformulated sentiment? Will it hold to its belief in a personal God? What will be its attitude toward death and immortality?

1. The present reaction against dogma is a very complex affair. Our wide-spread distaste is determined somewhat by our pleasure in our own escape from bigotry, somewhat by a genuine broadening of sympathies and a quickened perception of the degree to which religion is conditioned by social growth and of the relative nature of religious formulae. But with these healthy and right instincts blend others which might inspire us with less complacency. A certain haziness and laziness in thinking have been the natural concomitant of that deep and subtle materializing of our inner life consequent on our commercial civilization. The blight that has rested on the general religious consciousness during the modern epoch, may be, at least in part, responsible for the reluctance of people to adhere with any ardor to old creeds or to evolve new ones. For, after all, religious dogma only rep-

resents man thinking, and thinking on those high themes concerning which indifference is unnatural. His thoughts have not been tedious nor puerile nor empty: they have been noble, lofty, and profound. If it is unfortunate to cling to one's thought on Unseen Mysteries and our relations to them as final, it is also unfortunate to refuse to think at all. Victorian agnosticism only too often masked its indolence or discouragement as reverence, and represented simply an intellectual cowardice where it thought to achieve a philosophic depth. The dogmatizing ages were great and glorious ages in the history of the mind. We may hope to have escaped permanently the evil by-products of their ardors, —religious persecutions and spiritual arrogance; but in times of greater intellectual leisure and freedom it is quite probable that, while retaining the precious heritage of broad sympathies which the closing age bequeaths, we may also revive that passion for high spiritual adventure, that audacious yet worshipful endeavor to translate the elusive experiences of the spirit into terms that shall fix them as social possessions, which marked the great ages of faith and of the creeds.

Will these creeds be the old creeds, rediscovered, reasserted? Will they be new ones, inconceivable to us at present? Such questions no one can answer. We notice on the one hand in all modern religious movements, Catholic and Protestant, the striking revival of an instinct of continuity. Iconoclasm is no longer valued for its own sake; the escape from old shackles intoxicates no more. It is safe to predict that reverence for tradition will continue to increase, and that the creeds of the future will bear an organic relation to those of the past. Yet while the religious consciousness is, in one sense, permanent, it is, in another, constantly progressive. To press on bravely, reverently, seeking to reconcile loyalty with courage, in the new reaches of life that await us, is a duty arduous enough to preserve the future race from complacency, and to stimulate that ceaseless labor of the mind which is at once agony and life.

One guiding principle is plain. Thought is constrained today, whether it will or no, to place new emphasis on the human side of religious evolution, and to perceive the large measure of control exercised by social and economic conditions over religious

formulae. Disinterested scholarship has no more vital task before it than to analyze and follow this control. To call faith the mirror of life would be inaccurate; but at least that far glory on which the eyes of faith are ever fixed is seen by men through the life they share and of which they are the product. The time has come for even the most orthodox to accept this point of view boldly, and to recognize that, whatever happens to formulae, concepts change from age to age, such change being largely, though obscurely, determined by the characteristics of the social structure. Now humanity has never yet realized itself as a social democracy, and we may be sure that whatever may be the fate of religion in the socialist state new experiences are awaiting it.

In thus acknowledging the power of social institutions to control, if not to generate religious ideas, we must not be thought necessarily to imply a purely human origin for religion. Religion itself is not born from below, but from above. Of this that ultimate criterion of knowledge, the experience of the race, assures us even more clearly than metaphysical enquiries. All positive definitions and intuitions of spiritual truth have pointed to a great Reality. This confidence protects and reassures us in days when thoughts of process too often overpower those of ultimate origin. Formulae alter, theologies change, determined largely by the phases of social growth; yet they are all alike attempts, not to give a body to illusion, but to portray experienced fact. Once assured of this, the soul can rest secure, however winds may strain and waves may rage. Religion has from the first been no mere translation of desire into metaphor; it has been the progressive effort, less crude as the generations pass, to describe experience. This experience deepens and widens through the ages, and formulae slowly follow experience, but the "God, Creation's secret Force," is forever, "Himself Unmoved, all motion's Source," and through all groping and temporary obscurity we move ever nearer to the Uncreated Light.

2. A profound religious transformation must then accompany every social transformation. Nowhere is this law more evident than in regard to the greatest of all objects of human thought,

the conception of Deity. We see with increasing clearness that the great word, God, greatest that mankind has ever uttered, connotes a different concept in every age. The God of nomadic tribes is a tribal chieftain. The God of feudalism, as imaged in the superb mosaic that overlooks ruined Messina from the fallen glory of its shrine, is a masterful feudal overlord. That this conception of ultimate being will be deeply, if subtly, affected by the social forms of the future till it assumes a character which we can only dimly predict, is indubitable. How then are men likely to think of God in the socialist state? Shall we be able still to use the dear forms and emotions of childhood? May we retain the idea of Personality as an attribute of the Informing Spirit of the world?

No question is more crucial, none more unanswerable. Yet we may gain pregnant hints from the life we know. For democracy is already affecting as deeply as it is unconsciously the general conception of God. Looking within, we are aware that to us the Final Reality that controls the secret thought is no distant Monarch, the natural Ruler of a world aristocratically organized, but a pervading Spirit, so manifest in the life of Nature and the social whole that it is easy to confuse Him with that very world which He inspires. Immanental rather than transcendental ideas of Deity have proved the natural product of modern life. They rose unmistakably coincident with the rise of democratic feeling, its earliest correlative and its crowning glory, overpowering formal creeds in the mind even of so orthodox a poet as Wordsworth, and supplementing all other religious conceptions to a Shelley or a Rousseau; and they are rising still to ever greater dominance. Now socialism is simply democracy coming to its own, and is certain to strengthen rather than to weaken the intuition of the Immanent God. This intuition, native to our social forms, is already emphasized by the influx of pantheistic ideas from the East and by the recent suggestions of science. Realizing how deeply the civilization to be will be penetrated by these influences, it is safe to predict that in the socialist state, an intensified form of the modern faith in a God revealed through His universe rather than apart from it, manifested in all that we in our ignorance call impersonal as well

as in our human consciousness, will be a vital, illuminating, and sustaining mode of thought among the devoutly disposed.

If even in the individualistic democracy we know, despite the image of scrambling egotisms which, taken in the mass, it presents, immanent ideas of God thus keep pace with the growth of mystical feeling for the social whole, we must believe that these ideas will increasingly prevail as democracy becomes slowly transformed from an individualistic to a social type, and shows an harmoniously ordered unity in which thought may easily discern the reflection and working of a Divine Life. Yet we must beware of thinking that this is the whole story. The conception of a God "sustaining the world by the immanence of His Will" is certain to grow clearer: it would be rash to assert that the other conception of One who "transcends the world in the glory of His Being" will necessarily fade away. For we cannot question that in modern society the sense of personality is constantly growing more acute. Democracy from its birth had a marvellous perception of the glory and significance of the individual; this perception is starting-point and foundation of that collective ideal which is coming to dominate our thought. At the outset of the democratic period the piercing accents of Blake, summing up all that the most daring anthropomorphism could express, leave us breathless:

"Thou art a man: God is no more:  
Thine own humanity learn to adore."

From Emerson to Browning the lesson has been reëchoed in exaltation. As democracy develops, this feeling for the miracle of personality is likely to deepen. If socialism, by enhancing the common consciousness and emphasizing collective action, withdraws, as it well may do, some props round which the separatist ideal of life has twined, it will, none the less, if only from the fact that it will mark the highest stage yet of social evolution, teach us to value and experience the mystery of our own being as never before. The larger freedom for individual development toward which we look when our brutalizing conditions shall have yielded to a more generous fostering of human aptitudes, will inevitably bring with it a growing delight in that diversity of

character which is, so far as we know, the last triumph, as it is the last mystery, of the universe. However much farther the analysis of multiple personality may be carried, the man must always remain one, and finally the only, actor in his own inner world. Self-consciousness, which has become infinitely deeper and more intricate since the days of Homer, will become continually more intense and subtle: known by each man in himself, inferred by him in others, it will remain while he lives, if not when he thinks, the surest fact on his horizon. Now, no matter what wide reaches of unsounded being alien or akin to his own man may dimly discern in the Infinite, he can never exclude from that Infinite the highest and surest mode of existence that he knows. Still spirit will seek to meet with Spirit; and, after all, to protect the possibility of that meeting was all which the theologians ever meant with their insistence on the much-battered, largely misunderstood, highly unsatisfactory, and wholly indispensable term, a personal God.

That the very conception of personality, whether human or divine, is, however, to be immensely enlarged and enriched, partly through the advance of psychology, partly through a widening social experience, partly through new insight into the spiritual life of nature, we cannot doubt. Not without meaning is symbol the synonym for creed. The symbol for Infinite Reality cherished by the coöperative commonwealth must contain a wider majesty than is known today. We are not likely to apprehend God more intensely than the Psalmist or St. Augustine: in dwelling on the evolutionary aspects of religion we must not forget that it is in one sense the most static of phenomena, enabling us more than aught else in history to measure our own littleness and the slowness of our advance. But though we may not feel more intensely, that which we feel will be more in accordance with the depths of the riches of the unsearchable Being of God. Forms of religious thought are the final test of every civilization: in the new society, the Voice of the Beloved, speaking to the disciple as it has spoken from the beginning, will rise from regions of consciousness before unsounded, and echo from a range of experience coextensive with a universe ever more holy because ever more alive. Those social conceptions

which are already so intimately affecting the springs of thought, must, when perfected, lead to religious conceptions in which ideas of transcendence and immanence may be at least partially fused, and which will be as far removed from the empty monotheism of the eighteenth century or the lower ranges of Unitarianism as from the crass tritheism of current orthodoxy. Orient and Occident will contribute to the idea. The God of the East is perceived from the vast silences of Nature: the God of the future democracy must rather be the God of them that dwell in cities. Yet if we are really to build "in England's green and pleasant land" a nearer image than heretofore of the "Civitas Dei," it may well be that the heavens and He that dwelleth therein shall be as well discerned from its streets thronged with comrades as from the lonely sweep of the desert or the peaks of farthest Himalay. Of one thing we may be sure: no ideal that bearing the test of time and social change has proved permanently life-giving, will ever be discarded from religious concepts. And among such ideals we must give first rank to faith in a God who forever assures his creatures that before they call he will answer, and while they are yet speaking he will hear.

3. What, let us ask in brief conclusion, will be the attitude of the future toward Death and Immortality? One foresees men divided into varying groups and schools. As life grows sweeter and this world more dear, horror of departure may be intensified and Death may play with new poignancy his rôle as King of Terrors. Modern theories, however, if verified, offer help and consolation. For longevity may be prolonged till the signal to depart is grateful. When the term of natural life, which we are told is now never reached, shall be generally attained, cessation may be as gentle as the fall of the leaf, as much desired as sleep after a long and joyous day.

But how imagine men incurious concerning the awakening? Surely no development or refinement of resources can ever make this world other than an inn, a resting-place, to the nobly tempered soul. Many motives interplay to create the desire for immortality. Among these it is quite conceivable that the mere longing for physical continuance, now natural to a healthy organism, may weaken; but revolt against separation from loved

ones, hatred at leaving unfinished tasks, and indeed the sheer dramatic passion for living, are not likely to fade. An impulse different from all these is, however, at the heart of the craving for immortality. This is the desire of the God-intoxicated for the unveiled vision of Him seen darkly here through the glass of nature and humanity; but there, if the Apostle be trusted, face to face.

It is strange and startling to note how currently the craving for a life to come is discussed today apart from any question of faith in God. Even so reverent a thinker as Mr. Lowes Dickinson speaks in his Ingersoll lecture as if the desire that the Good may be strengthened and more knowledge attained were our noblest incentive to hope for immortality. But thought of this type can never satisfy. It follows the disastrous advice of the Boyg to Peer Gynt, and "goes round about," till the very point and centre is never reached. If separated from interest in our relation to a living God, speculations concerning immortality would have run a course quite different from the fact. The noblest Christian men and women have always desired to survive death chiefly that they might see his countenance. What are all other desires compared to this? It is no verbal invention; it has been, to chosen spirits, a controlling fact for nearly two thousand years. True, not all men experience it; but neither do all men respond to the motives of Mr. Lowes Dickinson. What reason is there for supposing that it will weaken as time goes on? No quickening intuition of the divine present in the natural order, no rise of pantheistic passion, can ever satisfy the longing for unhampered and perfect fellowship with Him who was "before all worlds." As Herbert Spencer pointed out, our contact with unknown mystery constantly widens with the increase of the circumference of our knowledge. The more the circle expands, the more will be our need to escape from all relation to "the wheel" of phenomena into conscious union with the Uncreated and the Unconfined. The craving for the beatific vision will never die. If reincarnations must multiply before it be attained,—and this view is sure to gain vogue as Eastern influences increase,—why, death will be the portal to another stage in the long pilgrimage. If

the older Christian orthodoxies persist, death will be the signal for the plunge into those purifying fires which, as believed by Dante, by Catherine of Genoa, by the Catholic world at large, do darkly reveal to the soul the light of the countenance of God. Shrinking from death and longing for death—variously motivated, functioning on various planes—will then coexist in the future as they do today. Speculations concerning immortality may quite conceivably be merged in a clearer knowledge than we now possess; but however this may be, the “*Vera Patria*” will always shed its light upward from beneath the horizon, and the dream of its glories will continue to summon men to nobler and sterner living in the midst of the allurements of a world fairer than the one we know.